

Selection from:  
**Under the Shadow of Death**  
by Lisa Loden

“In the shade of the mango tree,  
beside the rosebush,  
stands an ancient plowshare,  
a symbol of peace,  
created from forged iron.  
Perhaps it was once iron swords.

Under the lengthening shadow of death,  
live seventeen million  
Israelis, Gazans, Palestinians  
divided by impenetrable walls,  
walls of suspicion, hatred, fear.  
Grief, and suffering stalk their streets

At the Gazan borders, by the sea  
untold thousands, soldiers  
stand ready to invade.  
A million ordered to evacuate  
each one a mother, father,  
brother, sister, daughter, son.

The dream of peaceful plowshares,  
scent of roses, redolence of ripe mango  
obliterated by smoke, shrapnel  
and fallen ash on once holy ground.  
stained now by death's red shadow,  
and the double-sided stab of iron swords.”

...“We, the most privileged of all,  
we who know the grace,  
the mercy of the living God  
called to walk in love,  
to do justice, to love mercy  
to walk humbly with our God.  
What will we do this day?  
Will we weep? Will we lament?  
Will we rejoice in victory?  
Will we cry out for life?  
Will we choose to see  
the open wounds of our Saviour,  
bleeding still for all his children?”

